

Elections and Political Processes: Political processes, including elections, are competitive and more effectively reflect the will of an informed citizenry

1. Program Status

According to Freedom House, today there are 120 electoral democracies (63 percent of the world's states), and that number has remained relatively steady in the last four years. Three new entrants joined the ranks this past year: Mexico, Senegal, and Yugoslavia; while Fiji, Haiti, and the Kyrgyz Republic recently left the ranks. Freedom House also reports that there are reasons to believe that this year will offer further momentum for new transitions towards democracy and cites **Peru** as a prime candidate due to the departure of Alberto Fujimori last year and elections planned for April 2001. The Center played a significant role in the **Mexico** and **Peru** elections last year and has provided rapid-response assistance to design activities to ensure that the electoral bodies in Peru are capable of administering the new elections.

Over the past five years, we have learned more about what works and what doesn't in election support and the development of political processes. For example, we have learned that authoritarian regimes are now stealing elections long before election day, thereby rendering some large international observation missions that come in for two to three days a waste of time and money. Our programming has adjusted to this growing trend, and USAID is funding more and more pre-election assessments. Last year we helped USAID/**Peru** to design a series of pre-election assessments that were carried out by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and The Carter Center. We also worked with USAID/**Zimbabwe** to design a program consisting of a pre-election assessment by NDI and an election day observation by the International Republican Institute (IRI). As for the historic elections in **Mexico** this past year, G/DG funded a series of pre-election assessments by IRI and then worked with State and the mission to program \$730,000 in ESF for election day observation missions.

Operationally, our implementing partners are also improving their capacity to carry out programs in elections and political processes overseas. In the early 1990s when USAID began providing significant support in this area, many of the long-term staff fielded to implement programs had technical expertise from elections work in the United States or Europe, but very little experience transferring these skills in other countries. Our partners developed a cadre of technical experts who now have such experience, not just from one country, but oftentimes from several countries. Also, our implementing partners are using experts from countries in which they have worked and which have gone through similar transitions, to provide assistance in other countries. A good example of this is that NDI has hired the head of the Pro-democracy Association in Romania to run its assistance program with the Kosovo Action Center Initiative, an election monitoring organization in Kosovo.

Technical Leadership: In FY 2000 G/DG issued *Managing Assistance in Support of Political and Electoral Processes* and took the lead in ensuring that missions and regional bureaus are aware of and using the Center's USAID *Political Party Development Assistance* guidance. G/DG is taking the lead, with PPC, in developing expanded policy for issuance in the ADS later this year. Center guidance of this kind was important in programming funds for political parties last year in **Serbia** and **Haiti**.

Grants and Contracts: Center grants and contracts were used to implement programs in 38 different countries, with almost \$20 million of mission funds going through CEPPS and

another \$9 million in IQC task orders being signed last year. Overall the Agency budgeted \$37 million for elections and political process assistance in FY 2000.

Field Support: Elections and political processes field support consists of a combination of TDY support, access to easy-to-use grants and contracts and assistance with using them, and technical assistance and advice based upon lessons learned and the latest experiences from other USAID Missions. TDY support was targeted to key countries holding elections this past year, including **Bosnia, Cote d'Ivoire, Haiti, Kosovo, Mexico, and Peru.**

2. *Statement of Purpose*

Elections are the ultimate means by which citizens hold their government accountable. Elections can also be a primary tool to expand political openings, increase citizens' political participation, and offer political parties and civil society organizations an opportunity to mobilize and organize supporters and develop alternative platforms with the public. USAID operating units with elections and political processes objectives now number 46, and many without specific elections objectives also do elections and political processes work.

The purpose of this program is to strengthen USAID programming and reinforce field-based efforts in the elections and political processes area. G/DG develops strategic approaches and program support to assist elections administration activities in an impartial and professional manner; train indigenous organizations to monitor elections and implement civic and voter education programs; improve citizen representation within political parties; and train newly elected legislators and local officials. To do this, the Center designs and manages new grants and contracts, develops technical leadership materials, carries out field assessments, assists the field in writing election strategies, and provides direct on-site assistance when needed. G/DG's approach focuses on institutionalizing and sustaining democratic electoral and political processes.

3. *Key Results*

Over the last year, many prominent elections stand out as successful (i.e., governments were held accountable, political openings were expanded, citizen participation was increased, and meaningful political choices were offered to voters). In **Cote d'Ivoire, Peru, and Serbia**, local civil society organizations effectively monitored and documented flawed election processes which, when combined with the work of democratic opposition movements and targeted international diplomatic pressure, served to overturn fraudulent results. G/DG took the lead, with the embassy, in on-site assistance to develop a post-coup election strategy in **Cote d'Ivoire**. In **Zimbabwe**, forces unleashed via the election process began to hold the government accountable for abuses and introduce pluralism into a one-party state. In **Mexico and Senegal**, long-dominant political parties accepted their defeat in free and fair elections, ushering in a consolidation of democracy. A pervasive problem remains whereby incumbent parties retain power through controlling electoral processes and/or undermining effective political competition, as seen in **Belarus, Haiti, Kyrgyzstan, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, and Zimbabwe**. G/DG funded a new program to support the fledgling opposition in **Belarus** this year, and Center grants and contracts were used to implement programs in **Uganda, Ukraine, and Zimbabwe** as well. Assuring that elections are meaningful competitions, and not simply symbolic gestures by governments with questionable commitments to democracy, is a key challenge for the future.

FY 2000 Elections

	Elections Assisted by G/DG	Elections Not Assisted by G/DG
USAID Presence Countries	Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Croatia, Georgia, Haiti, Kosovo, Mexico, Mongolia, Peru, Romania, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe	Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Paraguay, Russia, Senegal, Uzbekistan
Non-presence Countries	Cote d'Ivoire	Guinea-Bissau, Mauritius, Niger, Serbia, Thailand, Venezuela

Of the 31 developing countries that held elections during the rating period, more than half (16 in all) were assisted by the Center through cooperative agreements and contracts, technical advisory services, and/or TDYs. For the developing-country elections that were not assisted by G/DG, a select few were either supported by others in USAID/Washington (e.g., OTI and E&E Bureau in **Serbia**) or established their own grants or contracts with election partners based on G/DG-developed guidance (e.g., **Dominican Republic, Kyrgyzstan, Paraguay, Russia, and Senegal**). Still others were countries in which neither State nor USAID provided election assistance (e.g., **Guinea-Bissau, Mauritius, Niger, Thailand, and Venezuela**).

Elections were not the exclusive focus of G/DG's assistance. Broader support to political processes, especially political parties, was an important aspect of the Center's work over the last year. Political party development programs were implemented, using G/DG mechanisms, in countries like **Algeria, Guinea, Nigeria, Romania, and Ukraine**, and new programs were designed with our assistance in **Belarus, Bulgaria, and Russia**.

Foreign Policy. Throughout FY 2000, G/DG consistently demonstrated its capacity to support and influence key foreign policy objectives by designing, funding, and implementing new elections-related programs, often in a fast-paced, high-profile environment. This is thanks in large part to its CEPPS mechanism, recognized by colleagues within USAID, at State, and at the NSC as a mechanism that can rapidly respond to foreign policy priorities with critical assistance. Given their strategic and programmatic expertise, Center personnel have also been asked by other USG offices to participate in critical foreign policy electoral initiatives:

- Growing out of our work on peace negotiations in FY 1999, this year Center staff helped design and mobilize support for municipal elections in **Kosovo** via multiple TDYs, use of the CEPPS agreement, and ongoing support from Washington.
- In **Nigeria**, Center mechanisms provided assistance for political party development and legislative assistance—follow-on activities to those implemented last year related to voter education, election administration, and political party and civil society poll-watcher training. CEPPS continues to provide USAID/Nigeria with critical post-election support.
- G/DG developed the criteria for credible elections upon which USG assistance in **Angola** would be predicated and was asked by the embassy to present those criteria to the Angolan government at the U.S.-Angola Consultative Commission.
- The Center sent staff to **Peru** in December for 10 days to assist the mission to design election administration technical assistance for the groundbreaking April 2001 elections.
- More than \$8 million in ESF from State was obligated into CEPPS last year, including for programs in 10 countries in which USAID is not present.

Technical Expertise. Since its creation in 1995, G/DG has created a body of technical expertise related to elections and political process that is documented in publications and disseminated via subject-specific training. Two documents in the Technical Publication Series are key: *Managing Assistance in Support of Political and Electoral Processes* (January 2000) and *USAID Political Party Development Assistance* (April 1999). USAID democracy officers are becoming more knowledgeable about elections and political process programming due to efforts of the Center to develop and disseminate these materials to the field.

- Political party assistance policy for ADS is being drafted in collaboration with PPC. The policy clarifies how political parties can appropriately be assisted given the legal and policy restrictions against USAID influencing the outcome of elections and translates USAID best practices into clear policy guidance.
- At G/DG's 2000 DG Officers Workshop, Center staff trained participants from the field on the political party assistance guidance.
- At the same workshop, participants learned about principal election assistance activities and how to apply international election administration and observation standards through training and a case study organized by Center staff.

Field Support. In addition to those missions mentioned above, Center staff provided on-site support to USAID Missions in the form of long- and short-term TDYs, as well as direct assistance from Washington. Implementing mechanisms developed and made available to the field by G/DG continued to provide rapid-response capability. In FY 2000, the Center's elections IQC with IFES expired, and two new IQCs, one with IFES and one with Development Associates, were signed. In addition, G/DG has a \$525,000 rapid-response task order with IFES, which allows us to field teams almost upon request. The Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS) cooperative agreement, which allows missions to access NDI, IFES, and IRI services easily and quickly, was extended an additional year and its ceiling increased another \$25 million, ensuring a smooth transition as we issued a request for applications for a new \$70 million follow-on cooperative agreement. This cooperative agreement, which was recently awarded to CEPPS, includes \$3 million obligated by the Center to forward fund mission programs to allow for rapid response. CEPPS usage has increased compared to previous years, rising from the previous three-year average of \$12 million in mission add-ons to \$19.7 million in FY 2000.

- TDY support for elections and political process programs this year included **Bosnia, Cote d'Ivoire, Haiti, Kosovo, Macedonia, Mexico, and Peru**. G/DG grants and contracts were used to support elections and political process activities in 38 countries.
- **Mexico:** G/DG played a significant role in the July 2000 presidential elections by (1) funding pre-election programs and assessments in the year preceding the elections; (2) facilitating the obligation of \$730,000 in the Center's cooperative agreement with CEPPS a month before the elections to enable the partners to field international observer missions and to support domestic observers; and (3) sending Center staff to assist a short-staffed mission during the busy election period.
- **Peru:** The Center has played a key role in partnership with the geographic bureau and the USAID Mission, beginning in the fall of 1999 and continuing through today. As

mentioned above, G/DG worked with the mission to design a program that included a series of pre-election assessments by NDI and The Carter Center, and obligated those funds as well as additional State funds through CEPPS. Although these assessments highlighted major problems in the electoral process, the government of Peru was not willing to make the changes recommended to ensure a free and fair election. Following these seriously flawed elections, secret videotapes showing high level officials involved in bribery came to light, leading to then-President Alberto Fujimori's resignation. In October 2000, the Peruvian legislature passed constitutional reforms setting up a new electoral process and scheduled new presidential and congressional elections for April 2001. In December, G/DG sent a democracy officer to Lima to work with the mission to design a program of support for the elections. Shortly thereafter a team was deployed under a G/DG rapid-response task order to provide immediate assistance to the three bodies responsible for elections in Peru. At the same time, staff worked closely with the mission and IFES to design a longer-term program for two of the electoral bodies to ensure that they had the capacity to administer the April 2001 elections. This \$1.2 million program is being done through the Center's cooperative agreement with CEPPS.

- In FY 2000, 34 countries tapped CEPPS for programs, including
 - \$7.1 million for Africa: **Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe**
 - \$4 million for Asia/Near East: **Algeria, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Iraq, Mongolia, Oman, Sri Lanka, West Bank/Gaza, and Yemen**
 - \$7.8 million for Europe and Eurasia: **Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Croatia, Georgia, Kosovo, Romania, and Ukraine**
 - \$815,000 for Latin America and the Caribbean: **Mexico and Peru**
- Some examples of impact from these programs include
 - Strongly worded critiques of the **Zimbabwean** electoral processes by international observation teams deployed through CEPPS set a critical precedent that elections can be condemned as flawed before election day if the pre-elections environment is sufficiently weak.
 - G/DG technical assistance led to a more strategic plan to improve **Cote d'Ivoire's** troubled return to civilian rule. G/DG's work was instrumental not only in crafting an assistance program that documented the flaws of the electoral process and improved citizen's participation in it, but to insuring the timely implementation of a program that had a very short time horizon.

Program Management/Direct Development Impact. With the significant shift toward the use of CEPPS as the implementor of choice by field missions and regional bureaus, improved systems to sustain quality program management have been put into place. To ensure that missions have access to this centrally procured grant for political process programming, G/DG raised the ceiling and added a year to the term of the agreement, allowing for an additional \$25 million in mission obligations and programs through December 31, 2001.

- In FY 2000, Center funding made possible the development of handbooks on political party building, implementing legislative programs, media monitoring, parallel vote tabulation, civic organizing, best practices in citizen participation and legislative development, elections methodologies, and promoting legal and constitutional reform for free and fair elections. An example of how these efforts have impacted our implementing partners' activities is that NDI reported that its civic organizing programs now follow a less ad-hoc and a more structured and strategic approach as a result of developing the handbook on civic organizing.
- The Administration and Cost of Elections project (ACE), implemented under G/DG sponsorship, is a unique on-line elections planning database produced in partnership with the United Nations and International IDEA. This project (www.aceproject.org) is notable in that it allows for greater self-sufficiency, cost effectiveness, and sustainability of election administration efforts. Distribution of the second cut of over 5,000 copies of the CD-ROM version of ACE is continuing. Four thousand updated ACE User's Guides—1,000 English, 1,000 French, and 2,000 Spanish—were printed and are being distributed through the three partner organizations, increasing the access of this information beyond English speakers and people with access to the internet. USAID funding this year is expanding the information on ACE to include a module entitled "Media and Elections," sponsoring a Russian-language translation of the ACE material, and continuing an effort to create the Electoral Process Information Project, a database with standard information on country-level election processes. The impact is obvious with UNDP now translating it into Arabic with its own funding.
- G/DG continues to support the F. Clifton White Resource Center, which houses comprehensive information on elections and political processes worldwide through a collection of primary documentation. In FY 2000, the resource center staff hosted visits by election officials from **China**, representatives from Consejo Electoral del Estado **Mexico**, a delegation of parliamentarians from **Moldova**, NGO representatives from **Kazakhstan**, **Tajikistan**, and **Uzbekistan**, political party members from **Belarus** and various others. Officials from **Mexico's** Federal Electoral Institute also used the resource center in planning for Mexico's historic presidential election last summer. G/DG continues to work with IFES to assure sustainability of the resource center when CEPPS funding ends in December.
- G/DG, through CEPPS, initiated a program to promote global access to DG resources. The project provides selected partners' documents via the Internet in order to make the material available to a wider audience of democratic activists around the world. The aim is to pass on lessons learned that could serve as useful examples for developing more effective programs to promote democratic change. The project is currently in start-up.
- Using G/DG grants and contracts, comprehensive voter education activities facilitated greater participation in the electoral and political arena among targeted citizens in **Bosnia-Herzegovina**. Although the electoral process has sensitized people to focus attention on their leadership, it fails to provide them with adequate representation and, thus, threatens to undermine their already limited engagement in the process. Effective and stable democratic governance, however, relies on active citizen involvement. The activity assists community groups to document their needs, address their concerns to

appropriate municipal officials, and exercise due diligence and persistence in obtaining results. Results of the activity identified a significant increase in the number of cases in which citizens initiated and sought better service from their local government, as well as an increase in the number of citizens directly contacting public officials.

- G/DG's support to Latin American Political Leadership Academy through CEPPS has bolstered young leaders in **Bolivia, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, and Venezuela** to push for democratic renewal within political parties. Throughout various regions, the Center fosters associations of election authorities and officials as a way of networking and building intra-regional cooperation to promote and sustain effective election administration beyond USAID assistance.
- Center programs continue to support cross-fertilization among countries. For example, the budding Association of African Election Authorities (AAEA), led by the president of the **Ghanaian** election commission, reinforced ties within the region when **Burkina Faso** paid its membership dues and joined the ranks of **Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, and Uganda** as paying AAEA members. G/DG continues to support the publication and distribution of the AAEA newsletter. The wealth and diversity of articles represented in the newsletter indicates a solidification of the AAEA's role as a primary vehicle for the exchange of election- and democracy-related information all across the African continent. The goal is for the AAEA to become self-sustaining, much as the Association of Central and Eastern European Election Officials is poised to become as USAID support through IFES is scaled back.

4. Performance and Prospects

The Center continued to meet the targets it identified in last year's R4, including wide dissemination of its elections manual and political party development assistance paper to integrate more effectively lessons learned into the Agency's DG assistance. G/DG, working with PPC, built upon its political party development paper and drafted policy guidance. The Center continued to respond rapidly and strategically to political imperatives in elections and political processes in places such as **Cote d'Ivoire** and **Kosovo**. Finally, our training modules for G/DG's annual training conference were updated to include the new draft political party policy and international standards for election administration and observation.

The Center is on track to meet other objectives such as developing and applying a better management tracking system for CEPPS and the new IQCs; closing-out the CEPPS I agreement and starting up CEPPS II, which was recently signed by the Office of Procurement; continuing support for partners' new approaches in the field; and ensuring the sustainability of the ACE and F. Clifton White Resource Center.

During the next reporting period, G/DG will finalize Agency political party assistance guidance that builds upon best practices and continues to assure adherence to its provisions, particularly for programs using Center agreements and contracts. G/DG will begin research on the critical issue of campaign finance reform, analyzing research to date and developing documentation and recommendations on program approaches to assist field officers in tackling a tough-but-essential issue in democratization. The Center aims to provide technical assistance and field support to a select number of priority countries (e.g., Kosovo, Peru, and Uganda) over the course of the next year, helping to assure that Agency best practices and lessons learned are consistently applied in policy and program-level decision-making. G/DG also expects to

continue to respond rapidly and strategically to political imperatives in elections and political processes and will work to improve our monitoring of non-presence country programs. Finally, G/DG will continue to update its elections and political processes training modules for the Center's annual training conference.

5. *Principal Contractors, Grantees, or Agencies*

The Center's elections and political processes implementing mechanisms comprise one cooperative agreement and two IQCs. The CEPPS cooperative agreement includes the International Foundation for Election Systems, the International Republican Institute, and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs. This cooperative agreement has recently been re-competed and a new 5-year, \$70 million agreement was signed with CEPPS for a second phase of implementation, which begins in the next reporting period. Two new IQCs were awarded during this period to IFES and Development Associates.